



June 12, 2013

The National Security Working Group (NSWG) provides wide-spectrum coverage of issues like the Iranian threat, missile defense, sequestration, New START, events in Syria and more. We look forward to providing this newsletter to RSC members and welcome your input throughout the 113th Congress.

Newt Gingrich to speak at next EMP Caucus: infrastructure protection is key (Rep. Franks)

Devastating storms like Sandy and Katrina gave us troubling evidence that our power grid is incredibly vulnerable, and yet it is one of our strongest and most important stabilizing economic and societal pillars. Both domestic and international cyber criminals prove this argument for us as well - they target energy resources and power infrastructure assets daily because they know the kind of chaos that ensues when the lights go out.

The best ways to protect and safeguard our critical network infrastructure will be discussed by a special guest at the next **EMP Caucus event: Former Speaker Newt Gingrich** will lead the discussion **June 18th at 1 p.m.** on the importance of securing our electric grids from both naturally-occurring geomagnetic disturbances and electromagnetic pulse weapons, and the legislation that offers solutions to these national security issues.

The SHIELD Act, a bi-partisan bill which will strengthen and provide critical defenses for our national energy grid. It is imperative that our country address the danger to disruption or destruction of our national infrastructure; The SHIELD Act

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EMP Caucus with Newt
Tuesday, June 18, 1 p.m.
Rayburn 2237

is both an accountability solution, improving cooperation between our federal and commercial energy experts, and an immediate technological response, offering critical upgrades to our energy infrastructure.

It is critical that we protect our major transformers from cascading destruction. The SHIELD Act encourages industry to develop standards necessary to protect our electric infrastructure against both natural and man-made EMP events.

Please join the EMP Caucus as we welcome Newt Gingrich to speak on June 18th at 1 p.m. for an hour of enlightening discussion about this important topic.

Defending Our Troops: Religious Liberties and the NDAA (Rep. Fleming)

When any future servicemember takes the enlistment oath, they agree to support and defend the Constitution. While some DoD officials and outside groups would have us believe that that does include the "freedom of religion" clause to the First Amendment, Members of Congress know better than to attempt to strip the rights of those who have sworn to protect them.

Under a strained but not entirely implausible interpretation of last year's NDAA language providing religious protections for service members and chaplains, the Air Force has interpreted the statute as only protecting the "religious belief" of service members and not expression or exercise of those beliefs. In a March 2013 JAG memorandum, the Air Force clearly showed that the military is interpreting the language in that strained fashion: "the plain language of Section 533 pertains to the accommodation of beliefs . . .

actions and speech, however, are distinct from beliefs, and may serve as bases for administrative and punitive action."

The abuse in interpretation by DoD has not gone unnoticed, with new cases of religious discrimination seemingly reported each week including:

- A service member who received a severe and possibly career-ending reprimand from his commanding officer for respectfully expressing his faith's religious position in a personal religious blog
- An Air Force officer who kept a Bible on his desk along with other personal items for 18 years. When he transferred to his latest assignment he was told by his supervisor that he could not keep his Bible in public view, that it may "offend" someone if they saw it

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- Thousands of soldiers who received equal opportunity training labeling “Evangelical Christians,” “Catholics,” and “Ultra-Orthodox [Jews]” as “Religious Extremis[ts]” comparable to the KKK and Al Qaeda. This training, which was memorialized in writing, further instructed the service members that they may not “support” such “Extremist Organizations” by attending meetings, fund-raising, recruiting, helping lead or organize, or distributing literature. In other words, thousands of soldiers were told that they could not go to church, lead Sunday School, tithe, share their faith, or give out Bibles

A threat to religious liberty anywhere is a threat to religious liberty everywhere. If the United States is going to remain the beacon of light to the world, it must remain true to its principles, which starts with preserving the freedom of our own servicemembers. Last week, my religious liberty amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) was adopted with bipartisan support and the support of the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. This much-needed language clarifies that religious actions and speech, not just beliefs, are protected by the First Amendment. This amendment is aimed at



"A threat to religious liberty anywhere is a threat to religious liberty everywhere." - Rep. Fleming

stopping the unjust threats and reprimands against service members who have been speaking or acting in accord with their deeply held beliefs, while ensuring that military necessity and readiness are not compromised. If the United States cannot protect the religious beliefs of those serving our nation, how can it possibly be expected to promote freedom of religion around the world?

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The Case for Broadening and Strengthening Iran Sanctions (Rep. Cotton)

In the coming weeks, the House will consider the Nuclear Iran Prevention Act of 2013 (H.R. 850), which passed the Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously on May 22. As we've learned from sanctions imposed on other rogue regimes, sanctions are only effective if they are strictly and uniformly enforced and continuously revisited. As sanctions are applied, regimes have a tendency to find ways to circumvent many of them—the Nuclear Iran Prevention Act aims to stop this.

The committee adopted a number of bi-partisan amendments that aim to thwart Iran's attempts to obtain nuclear weapons and continued human rights abuses against its own citizens. Among those adopted were two amendments that I offered—the first requires a report related to financial net worth of certain high-ranking Iranian government officials and the second strengthens reporting requirements related to the timeline of Iran's nuclear capabilities as well as how existing sanctions have affected Iran's economic viability.

Before H.R. 850 reaches the President's desk, there are still many opportunities to make the legislation even stronger. For instance, I offered an amendment during the mark-up

that would apply specific travel and economic sanctions to certain family members of sanctioned Iranian government officials. Current law and the bill that passed committee, identify specific Iranian officials for sanctions, primarily U.S. visa ineligibility and certain financial restrictions. My amendment would expand this list of Iranian persons to include those official's spouses and relatives to the third degree of consanguinity to prevent Iranian officials from using relatives to evade sanctions, an all-too-common practice in Iran and other tyrannies. We need look no further than Syria, where the country's wealthiest person is not its oppressive and dangerous leader, Bashar al-Assad, but rather is his cousin, Rami Makhoul.

While Congress has passed many pieces of tough sanctions legislation in the past several years, this legislation is vital to close loopholes that are being exploited by the Iranian government and to halt their nuclear ambition—which sets the entire Middle East on a dangerous path towards nuclear proliferation. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and to support measures that inflict the maximum amount of financial pain on Iranian government's worst malefactors.

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Each NSWG Item reflects the position and view of the authoring office. Questions or comments regarding the NSWG can be directed to: Joe Murray, Joe.Murray@mail.house.gov or 6-0678